Amendments to the Specification

Please replace paragraph [0001] with the following amended paragraph:

[0001] This application is a continuation of my co-pending U.S. Patent Application 09/804,050 filed March 12, 2001, which is, itself a continuation-in-part of my co-pending U.S. Patent Application 09/705,056 filed November 2, 2000, now abandoned, which is in hereby incorporated in its entirety herein.

Please replace paragraph [0056] with the following amended paragraph:

[0056] In Figures **2c** and **2d**, a car **70** is similar to car **20**, except insofar as single bay diagonal braces **74** are used rather than double bay braces. In both of cars **20** and **70**, the respective end deck portions are offset upwardly from the lading supporting structure of medial deck portion **29** by a height increment indicated as δ (Figure **2a**). In the embodiments illustrated in Figures **2a**, **2b**, **2c** and **2d**, the step increment corresponds to the height of a nominal 31 1/2 inch bundle of lumber, plus dunnage, (that is, 31½ inches of lumber plus 1 – ½ inches of dunnage), totalling 33 inches plus a ⅝ inch tolerance for an actual step height of ~~33⅝* (+/– A")~~ 33 5/8" (+/-1/8"). If the bundle of lumber is a lesser height, such as 30 inches, the discrepancy may be made up by additional dunnage.

Please replace paragraph [0061] with the following amended paragraph:

[00061] As seen in Figures **4a** and **4b**, medial side sill portion **45** has a channel-like profile, having top or upper flange **130**, noted above, a bottom or lower flange **132**, and a back, or web, **134**. However, while top flange **130** and bottom flange **132** lie in parallel horizontal planes, web **134** does not stand perpendicular to them, and does not stand vertically perpendicular. Rather, web **134** is canted upward and outward at an angle [[b]] ß measured from the vertical, such that flange **130** is displaced, or skewed, or stepped, outward relative to flange **132**. As seen in Figure **4a**, the extent of this outward positioning is such that both upper and lower flanges fall within the envelope of Plate **C**. A load securing device in the nature of a winch **138** is mounted to the outboard face of web **134** for tightening strapping **136** about the lading **137**. The slanted incline of web **134** permits the center of rotation of winch **138** to be

drawn inward toward the center line of rail car **20** (or **70**), thus tending to permit the medial portion **29** of deck structure **26** to be carried at a lower height than might otherwise be the case.

Please replace paragraph [0064] with the following amended paragraph:

[00064] Knee **47** (or **49** of opposite hand) is located at the transition, or step, between end portion **28** (or **27**) and medial deck portion **29**. Knee **47** is located at a mid-bay longitudinal station between the longitudinal stations of formed post **152** and post **154** (Figure **2a**). As above, the dropped deck portion of the deck (that is, medial deck portion **29**) ends at left and right hand knees, indicated as **47**, **49**. Other than being of opposite hands, they are of identical construction. The medial portion of the side sills, **45**, has been described above. The end portions **43** are formed from deep wide flange beams. As noted above, in the preferred embodiment the depth of the beam is determined at the lower flange by the height required to give adequate clearance over the wheels when the car is fully loaded and cornering, and the upper height limit of the upper flange corresponds to the ~~33N" (+/- A")~~ 33N" (+/- 1/8") height increment of the layers of bundles at the step in the deck at knees **47** and **49**. End portions **43** terminate, at their inboard ends at knees **47** and **49**, at a corner, **160**, (Figure **49**) that is enclosed with an angled end gusset **162** running on the diagonal between the upper and lower flanges of end portion **43**.